That a document of so confidential and momentous a character should have been found lying about in a front trench within reach of the enemy, *Was it* betrays such inconceivable carelessness *treachery?* that it is difficult to eliminate the idea of treachery. The point has never been cleared up, perhaps it never will be. Although the surprise attack on the right flank was not revealed, the incident apprising the Germans of the sector where the main attack was to be expected, turned out to be very detrimental to the chances of success. The second incident came later, and was even more serious in its effects. It is established beyond doubt and is recorded by the French Commission of Inquiry appointed by the French War Cabinet after the battle *Another similar incident* to inquire into its advisability and the tactics adopted during the fight. The Report states :—

> " The secrecy of the operations was compromised by regrettable confidences and by the capture on a non-commissioned officer of an order fixing the operations of the third group of armies."[9]

This N.C.O. was taken prisoner by the Germans on the night of 4th April, and the document which he carried gave the order of battle of the troops north of the Aisne and the various corps objectives. Here the whole scheme was given away. It is significant

that this kind of thing had never happened on either side before this offensive, and it is difficult to believe that it was altogether fortuitous. For

Political strife some time French Generals and their invades French military staffs had been conducting a bitter controversy amongst themselves as to the merits and demerits of the new plan. Before the